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From the Office of the Director of Health

World AIDS Day Focuses on Women

In the United States up to 950,000 Americans are estimated to have HIV. According to the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, in 2002 Missouri had more than 10,000 residents infected with HIV/AIDS and 10% of those cases were women.

Women and girls are at higher risk of contracting HIV if they are infected with a sexually transmitted disease such as chlamydia or gonorrhea. In the last five years, gonorrhea cases in Greene County have nearly tripled. The majority of these cases are women.

On December 1st this year's World AIDS Day will focus on women. Its theme "Women, Girls, HIV and AIDS" highlights the biological, social and economic differences between women and men that make women more vulnerable to HIV and AIDS. World AIDS Day is dedicated to remembering the victims of AIDS, learning more about its devastating effects around the world and reaffirming the commitment to fight it.

In observance of World AIDS Day the Springfield-Greene County Health Department will offer no cost HIV tests at 227 East Chestnut Expressway. Registration takes place Wednesday from 8:00 am to 10:30 am and again from 1:00 pm to 3:30 pm. For more information on additional HIV clinic walk-in hours or to make an appointment, please call 864-1686.

Anyone at risk for HIV/AIDS should be tested. Actions taken today will likely have a long-term impact on the AIDS epidemic, especially among women and girls.

For more information, contact:

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